

A WASHINGTONIAN YOU SHOULD KNOW
ROBERT B. IRWIN '06

Herbert T. Condon

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A Washingtonian You Should Know

Robert B. Irwin '06

By HERBERT T. CONDON

IN introducing the name of Robert B. Irwin, '06, for the group "Washingtonians You Should Know" I fully appreciate the inadequacy of the few words which this space can afford. Greater justice could be done if it were possible to reproduce the excellent biographical sketch of Irwin which recently appeared in the Quarterly Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind. This, however, constituted pages of the Association's bulletin, which of course would be impossible of reproduction here.

Another announcement, however, is well worth making in the Alumnus—within the year Western Reserve University in Cleveland awarded Irwin the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. For this citation an old friend, an alumnus of the University of Washington, Herbert C. Hunsaker '23, Dean of Cleveland College and Director of the Downtown Center of Western Reserve University, was selected to make the award. It would seem appropriate and within the limitations of these pages to quote in full the citation which Dean Hunsaker pronounced on this occasion. It is as follows:

"Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting to you Robert Benjamin Irwin, Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind, who has made distinguished contributions in education, social work, and legislation for the blind people of this nation and of the world.

"Blind himself since childhood, self-supporting as a student in college, he has devoted the full energies of his mature life to enabling blind people to enjoy fuller, richer, and more useful lives.

"At the beginning of his professional

career, as a teacher in the Cleveland public schools and with the active co-operation of the Cleveland Society for the Blind, he organized Braille and sight-saving classes which have served as models for more than 300 cities in the United States.

"More than any other person of his time he has been responsible for the increase in literature for the blind, through the development of the Braille interpointing in the United States, through the speaking world, through the securing of Federal funds for the printing and distribution of Braille books, and through his pioneering in the development of the Talking Book. He was responsible for organizing in 1931 the first world conference on work for the blind. An authority on employment and social legislation for the blind, he has participated in the drafting of most of the legislation enacted for the sightless people of the nation.

"Mr. Irwin is not only our nation's greatest living blind man, he is also a great humanitarian and a great citizen. I present him to you on the recommendation of the University Faculty for the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws."

The University of Washington may well be proud of this, "The nation's greatest living blind man."

Those of us who knew him well remember the mutual devotion that existed between Bob Irwin and Professor Edmund S. Meany. This constituted one of those beautiful sentiments for which the "Ideal Alumnus" was noted.

Bob was in every way a "live wire" as an undergraduate and always manifested the greatest interest in student activities and enjoyed the friendship and confidence of the entire student body and faculty.



ROBERT B. IRWIN



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Ground Broken on Vet's Higher Education Program

By MORT FRAYN

WHAT about higher education for the returning veteran? Will the University of Washington be prepared to meet the challenge of such problems as unfinished high schools careers, curricula alterations, short-cuts to business courses, the general increase in college age average, college training in the home community, review work for the war-interrupted college student, etc.?

Your Alumni Association has had a diversified committee studying this picture for over three months. Your suggestions concerning and participation in the proposed program would be valued. Briefly, we are concerned with the returning war veteran and his or her relationship to the University as a potential active student.

The reason for our interest and concern comes from two sources. First: Information gathered from veterans of World War I shows very little, if anything, was done to acquaint the veteran with the higher education program set up for him and there was an apparent lack of flexibility in that program. Second: In the case of World War II veteran, the same thing is now, in effect, happening. Those who have been discharged from the armed forces (already some 25,000 in the state of Washington, some 700 of whom have expressed interest in education—vocational, high school or college), are, in the main, not aware of the potential program under way, and the efforts to make higher education sufficiently flexible for the varied needs of the veteran.

We have made a start to avoid the mistakes of twenty-five years ago—mainly in acquainting the various Veterans organizations and Discharge Centers with our interest and to give them information of the activities under consideration by the University. Briefly, this has been a sympathetic understanding by the University authorities and faculty concerning the returning veteran's education problem. They are at the present time working out solutions to answer the varied problems, such as—recognition of Army, Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard work for credit value in lieu of of men and women, or of families with

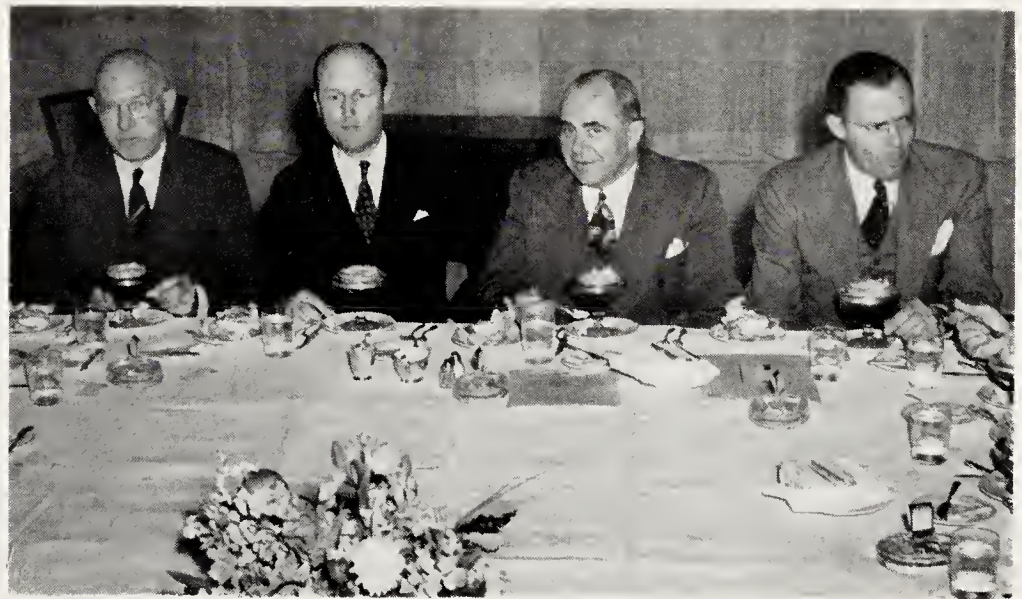
regular high school credentials or to be used for graduation credit; establishment of competent faculty reviewing boards in regard to the individual veteran's choice of college, curricula, background and possible refresher courses; an adequate adult education program (already approved by the Board of Regents) bringing the University to the community with classes conducted by top-flight members of the faculty.

What we are primarily interested in at the present time is the creating of interested alumni committees throughout the state of Washington who will have this information, plus the additional facts regarding government aid, etc., for veterans as the problem increasingly arises. Some of the community appointments have been made. We realize that these must be expanded and in some cases substituted for. *We emphasize that the program is in no way to be regarded as a 'solicitation of students', but we feel you as an interested alumnus will know*

their sons or daughters in the service, who should be told what their opportunities are,—first, in the way of higher education as a returning veteran, and secondly, what the University of Washington in particular has to offer.

Our early findings have clearly shown that some of our most interested co-workers are found among the fathers and mothers of those in or about to go in the service. The ALUMNUS will contain up-to-date information as it develops and the Alumni Office will supply you with printed material available for distribution to interested parties upon the completion of the University plans and those now before Congress.

Regard this as an invitation to write us a note if you care to have your name added to the committee in your community, or in the event that no such committee has yet been commenced in your locality, if you would care to start one. Send any suggestions you may have regarding our program.



LEADERS OF ALUMNI VETERAN'S INFORMATION PROGRAM

Dr. Lee Paul Sieg, President of the U. of W.; Honorable Arthur B. Langlie '26, Governor of the State of Washington; George G. Rogge '20, President of the U. of W. Alumni Association; R. Mort Frayn '27, Chairman Alumni Steering Committee.

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